



NEWS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation

Cincinnati Field Office-Cleveland, Ohio POD

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For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WESTLAKE MAN SENTENCED IN TRI STATE MONEY LAUNDERING SCHEME

Cleveland, Ohio

Maher J. Ali, 33, of Westlake, Ohio, was sentenced to serve 27 months of incarceration and 3 years supervised release for his role in a multi state food stamp fraud and theft ring. In addition, Maher J. Ali gave up his interest in \$530,000 which was forfeited to the government. He was remanded to the custody of the United States Marshall.

William J. Edwards, Acting United States Attorney for the Northern Judicial District of Ohio; Jose A. Gonzalez, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service, Criminal Investigation, and Smokey Everett, Special Agent in Charge, United States Secret Service, announced the sentence handed down by Federal Judge Peter C. Economus in Youngstown, Ohio.

According to court records, Maher J Ali, and his brothers, Mazen J. Ali, 31, and Munier J. Ali, 25, used their businesses, D.N.A. Selesteen, Inc. dba Goldcoast Food Market, a small convenience store located at 1076 E. 105th Street, Cleveland, Ohio, to engage in \$575,000 of food stamp fraud.

In addition, Maher J. Ali and his brothers used Glentrade, Inc., a wholesale business located at 12120 Madison Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio, to purchase items of stolen property, including baby formula, over the counter medications, and electronic devices, from various individuals and then resold the stolen items to other businesses in Michigan,



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Florida, Kentucky, and Columbus, Ohio. Between May 2005 and March 2006, Mazen J. Ali traveled with others throughout Ohio and neighboring states, including Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, in order to steal baby formula, over the counter medications, and electronic devices. The court found that the defendants sold more than \$2 million of stolen property to the other businesses.

These charges arose from an investigation by agents of the Northern Ohio Organized Crime and Money Laundering Task Force, consisting of agents and investigators from the Secret Service, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigations Division, U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General, Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, United States Postal Inspection Service, the Cleveland Police Department, and the Westlake Police Department. The brothers entered guilty pleas on February 27, 2008. Mazen J. Ali and Munier J. Ali, will be sentenced at a later date.

Jose A. Gonzalez, Special Agent in Charge, IRS, Criminal Investigation, stated “ Money laundering is not a victimless crime. Not only are innocent people “duped” by various schemes, but the underground, untaxed economy harms the entire nation’s economic strength.”

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